

## ExceleRate Subcommittee, Minutes of March 2020 meeting

Thursday, March 19, 2020, 10:30 – 12:30

By conference phone

### Present

Amanda Heinz, Ann Hentschel, Ann Kremer, Barb Volpe, Beth Knight, Carie Bires, Carisa Hurley, Cerathel Burnett, Cindy Berrey, Cindy Wall, Deborah Chalmers, Debra Clark, Denise Monnier, Donna Emmons, Emily Ropars, Felicia Crawford, Jennifer Alexander, Karen Berman, Kisha Davis, Lauren Lansdale, Maribel Centeno, Marie Masterson, Pat Chamberlain, Tamara Sanders-Carter, Teri Talan, Tom Layman, Toni Porter

#### 1. **Welcome and introductions**

#### 2. **Minutes of previous meeting**

Donna Emmons moved to approve the minutes of the Feb. 20 meeting. Beth Knight seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### 3. **Pilot standards summary and CQI process**

The Subcommittee discussed the document “Pilot Standards Summary & CQI Process” as background for agenda item 4. Discussion topics included:

- The importance of external Communities of Practice for site leaders.
- Training and support for conducting online, virtual meetings will be needed, especially because the pilot covers rural counties.
- The importance of messaging from ExceleRate and TA providers that program data is for the site’s use, not for ExceleRate to make judgments. This message will need to be repeated throughout the year.
- Ann Hentschel reported that New Jersey is developing a similar process that introduces the domains over time, spending the initial months on the equivalent of Domains 1 (Culture of Improvement) and 2 (Administration) and the first bullet under Domain 3 (receive baseline assessment information), before asking teams to implement the CQI reflective practices of Domain 3 (Teaching & Learning).

#### 4. **Evaluation of the PDG B5 child care pilot**

*Background (from agenda):* Over the past two years, the Subcommittee has developed a framework for program improvement on a large scale. The two drivers we identified are:

- Fund child care staffing adequately, including staffing patterns, qualifications and compensation – and fund it up-front through contracts, not as a reward once quality has been achieved.
- Require CQI at all ExceleRate levels above Licensed and build publicly funded technical assistance and support services.

The subcommittee decided that program/site cultures of improvement are the foundation for CQI, and determined that program leaders are key to building that foundation. We described what a program leader needs to do at the site level and organized those activities into 8 component categories aligned with the Whole Leadership Framework. The standards and process summary, described in the previous agenda item, gives an overview of how Illinois might help programs to get started implementing CQI.

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*Discussion:* PDG B5 funding is available to evaluate this pilot. The co-chairs asked for discussion on the following questions: What types of questions do we want the evaluation to answer? Implementation questions; provider satisfaction or parent satisfaction questions; outcome questions; or other categories? And what specific questions come to mind as you view the standards and process as a whole? Suggestions included the following:

### Implementation questions

- How much time did it take programs to hire staff? Were they able to find qualified staff?
- How was the contract funding used? How was the staff deployed? What new or expanded roles did they play?
- How did programs develop staff members' skills? "Grow your own" & link to trainings? Job-embedded learning? Work with community hubs? Develop a substitute pool?
- What improvement areas did programs choose to work on?
- Did program leaders implement the standards and establish the required CQI processes such as monthly Plan-Do-Review meetings?
- What dosage was needed? How many meetings were held per topic area?

### Results questions

- Reduced turnover?
- What happened where leadership turned over? Were CQI processes sustained?
  - Is shared leadership part of our model or standards?
  - (Caution expressed: Have contract signed by owner, corporation or board – not just site director. Deborah Chalmers will send Tom a possible model from a consultation agreement.)
- Evidence of improvement in program-selected improvement area
- Did programs change their selected improvement areas over time?
- Post-year assessments would be expensive but could be used if only aggregate results were shared publicly (not individual program results).
  - Also, the Subcommittee noted that change takes time, and the pilot might not be long enough to see significant overall change.
  - Simpler tools like pre and post job satisfaction surveys might be useful
- Reduced suspension & expulsion of children
  - Do teachers feel better supported or more able to address challenging behaviors?
  - (Subcommittee felt that programs need more information about the rule.)
- Parent participation (parent voice in the process) and satisfaction
- Did a focus on one improvement area lead to change in other areas as well?

### Evaluation methods

- The Subcommittee felt that talking with leaders, staff members and parents would provide more accurate results than simply asking for paperwork.
- Review of expenditure reports
- Review of documentation submitted as evidence (to be defined)
- Review of formal program assessments
- Review of staff turnover rates and child suspension/expulsion rates

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Marie Masterson, Donna Emmons and Maribel Centeno have sent Tom documents with additional information and evaluation questions. Emily Ropars has sent Tom a link to training for virtual meetings, which he will share with the Subcommittee.

### **5. Next steps and next meeting**

The Subcommittee will now turn its attention to family child care standards and supports. The April meeting will be cancelled while the pilot is getting underway. The next meeting will be held by conference call on Thursday, May 21 from 10:30 to 12:30.

This new area of focus calls for some change in Subcommittee makeup. If members have suggestions for involving people with family child care experience or expertise, please let Tom know. If any members would like to leave the subcommittee as it changes focus, also let Tom or the co-chairs know.

Finally, if any members would consider working on a smaller family child care workgroup, please let Tom or the co-chairs know. Deborah Chalmers and Tamara Sanders-Carter have already expressed interest in this area.